United Nations A/55/783

General Assembly

Distr.: General
13 February 2001

Original: English

**General Assembly**
**Fifty-fifth session**
Agenda items 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 33, 37, 39, 50, 61, 73, 86, 99, 107, 109, 110, 114, 170, 180 and 182

**Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of American States**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Asian-African Legal Consultative Committee**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Caribbean Community**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of the Islamic Conference**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the League of Arab States**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Cooperation Organization**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe**

**Implementation of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, including measures and recommendations agreed upon at its mid-term review**

**Culture of peace**

**Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the special session of the General Assembly in this regard**

01-25042 (E) 140201

**Support by the United Nations system of the efforts of Governments to promote and consolidate new or restored democracies**

**Causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa**

**Strengthening of the United Nations system**

**General and complete disarmament**

**Comprehensive review of the whole question of peacekeeping operations in all their aspects**

**Implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006)**

**Advancement of women**

**Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions**

**Promotion and protection of the rights of children**

**Human rights questions**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Council of Europe**

**Cooperation between the United Nations and the Economic Community of Central African States**

**Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit**

## Letter dated 12 February 2001 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly

I am writing to convey the results of the Fourth High-level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting, which was recently held at United Nations Headquarters on 6 and 7 February 2001, in which you were a prominent participant.

The Meeting was held in the context of the recent open debate of the Security Council on peace-building, and I am pleased to inform you that a very productive exchange of views took place on the theme "Cooperation for peace-building".

We agreed on a number of general principles to guide our future cooperation, and identified a number of specific cooperative activities that we plan to undertake in this field. These are summarized in the enclosed document, entitled "Framework for cooperation in peace-building" (see annex I), which reflects my personal understanding as Chairman of the Meeting of the many useful proposals that were presented. I am also enclosing a copy of my concluding statement (see annex II), which highlights some of the main points of discussion at the Meeting, together with a list of participants (see annex III).

Great emphasis was placed by many participants at the meeting on the fact that peace-building must be a home-grown process, in which the role of the United

Nations and regional organizations is to support national endeavours. It was therefore agreed that the promotion of national self-reliance should be the fundamental goal of all cooperative peace-building activities by the United Nations and regional organizations.

While focusing on the opportunities for future cooperation, our meeting also recognized a number of constraints to effective peace-building. In particular, it was noted that there is often a lack of sustained political support by the international community for long-term peace-building after the signing of a peace agreement. In addition, the mandates given to the United Nations and regional organizations frequently exceed their capacities. Furthermore, the resources for peace-building are limited and are often drawn from the same pool of funds provided by Member States for other activities. I believe that these are all areas in which the General Assembly could play an important role.

I would be grateful if you could bring the enclosed documents to the attention of the General Assembly, and I hope that it will be able to support the results of the Meeting. I also wish to thank you for the important contribution that you made to the success of the Meeting.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**

# Annex I

## Framework for cooperation in peace-building*

**Chairman's summary of the proposals presented at the Fourth High-level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting, New York, 6 and 7 February 2001**

## I. Guiding principles for cooperation in peace-building

- The promotion of **self-reliance** should be a fundamental goal of all cooperative peace-building activities. Hence, peace-building must be a **home-grown process** in which the role of the United Nations and regional organizations is to support **national endeavours**.
- The aim of cooperation in the field of peace-building is to ensure **speedy operational response** and **optimum mobilization of resources** — human, technical and financial — in a mutually supportive effort geared to the priority needs of the affected countries.
- Joint activities in the field of peace-building should be directed at **preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflict**, with the cooperation of the parties concerned.
- Cooperation should be based on **comparative advantages** of the United Nations and regional organizations so as to lead to **complementarity of efforts**.
- Actions taken must be **multidisciplinary** in the widest sense and could encompass **five key areas of peace-building**: negotiation and implementation of peace agreements; security stabilization; good governance, democratization and human rights; justice and reconciliation; and humanitarian relief and sustainable development.
- **Mobilization of international assistance** should be undertaken in a coordinated fashion so that it fills priority gaps and is **complementary to the country's own efforts**.
- Assistance in peace-building should be guided by **needs** rather than by geographic preferences.
- Efforts must be made to ensure that peace-building is undertaken on the basis of **international legitimacy**.

## II. Possible cooperative activities

### A. Capacity-building

- **Establish peace-building units** in the United Nations system and regional organizations and develop regular channels of communication on peace-building issues, including raising public awareness.

* This framework also applies to cooperation between the United Nations and participating intergovernmental organizations.

- **Strengthen existing national and regional mechanisms** for prevention, conflict resolution and peace-building.
- **Exchange lists of staff officers** involved in peace-building activities by country/region and functional areas.
- **Visits of staff** involved in peace-building at working level between the different headquarters.
- Develop **joint training** of staff in all aspects of peace-building.
- Develop **mechanisms and procedures** for mutually supportive peace-building operations.
- Exchange information on the **peace-building capabilities** of the United Nations and regional organizations.
- Jointly examine ways to build **links to civil society** organizations (including outreach to the public through the media and contacts with research institutions).

## B. Strategic development

- Establish an **information exchange mechanism** for early warning, analysis and better understanding of the root causes of conflict, and determine at which point a particular situation is "ripe" for mutually supportive peace-building action.
- Consider **joint preliminary assessment missions** to the field, wherever possible.
- Conduct regular **joint working group meetings**, both at Headquarters and in the field, to define the political objectives and key priority issues of a peace-building strategy.

## C. Operational interaction

- Establish **focal points and consultative processes** for the following operational purposes:
- Ensure that **peace settlements** mediated by the United Nations and regional organizations include commitments by the parties to the conflict to concerted action in the key priority areas of peace-building. Such agreements should be realistic in terms of their political objectives and financial implications.
- Mainstream a **gender perspective**, the **protection of children** and the **rights of individuals** and **minorities** into peace agreements and peace-building strategies. **Considerations** related to **refugees as well as small arms, and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration** should also be fully included.
- Ensure effective "**division of labour**" between agencies of the United Nations and regional organizations involved in peace-building activities based on comparative advantage.

- **Promote coordination of peace-building operations** both at Headquarters and field levels.
- **Ensure wide dissemination** at Headquarters and in the field of the agreements reached at this and previous meetings.

### D. Monitoring

- Establish **joint monitoring processes** to monitor the efficiency of cooperation (taking into account end of mission objectives).
- Establish **repertories of best practices and lessons learned** in the different functional areas of peace-building.

### E. Mobilizing political will and resources

- **Joint holding of pledging conferences** (bringing together the United Nations, regional organizations, donor countries, the Bretton Woods institutions etc.) to mobilize expeditiously international political support and the essential resource requirements of peace-building in an affected country.
- Explore the possibility of an **international facility for financing quick start-up peace-building projects** or a standing peace-building **trust fund**.

## III. Follow-up

- Undertake **follow-up at the working level** to develop the above possible modalities for peace-building and further develop the 13 modalities for conflict prevention jointly identified by the Third High-level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting (July 1998). The first such meeting could be convened by the United Nations before the end of 2001.
- **Regional workshops** could also be convened by interested regional organizations to discuss specific regional dimensions of cooperation in conflict prevention and peace-building.

# Annex II

## Statement made by the Secretary-General at the concluding session of the Fourth High-level United Nations-Regional Organizations Meeting

I think you will all agree that we have had a very productive exchange of views on the crucial subject of peace-building. Before we disperse, I would like to highlight some of the main points of the discussion, which appeared to command a broad measure of agreement:

- Peace-building is essentially a home-grown process, in which the role of the United Nations, and of regional organizations, is to support *national* endeavours.
- An effective peace-building strategy must address the *root causes* of conflict.
- Peace-building has a fundamentally *political* character. The different components of a peace-building strategy need to contribute to the overall goal of preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflict.
- Peace-building must be seen as a *comprehensive* strategy, involving political, social, developmental and humanitarian measures. The precise mix of measures needs to be carefully tailored to each situation, and to involve a broad range of national or international actors.
- Peace-building must include measures for promoting *good governance*, the rule of law, democratization and human rights as key components of a sustainable peace.
- The specific needs of *women*, and of vulnerable groups, such as *children and minorities*, are a key component of any peace-building strategy.
- *Quick-impact projects* can play an important role in the early phases of a peace-building operation.
- *Peacekeeping operations should incorporate peace-building as an integral component.* Efforts should be made to ensure a smooth transition from peacekeeping to long-term peace-building, particularly with regard to demobilization, disarmament and reintegration, the training of civilian police, and measures to prevent the spread of small arms and light weapons.
- Each organization must conduct its peace-building activities *on the basis of its own mandate* so as to ensure the legitimacy of its actions.
- The United Nations and regional organizations must cooperate more closely in *sharing information* in order to better analyse and understand the multifaceted roots and dynamics of conflict.
- Ideally, all relevant actors in peace-building should *come together early* in the negotiating phase of a peace agreement to ensure effective implementation and to avoid duplication of efforts.
- We all need to be more aware of each other's capabilities in this field in order to ensure that our efforts complement each other.

Our discussions also identified a number of *obstacles* to more effective peace-building. Often, for example, there is a lack of sustained political support by the international community for long-term peace-building after the signing of a peace agreement. In addition, the mandates given to the United Nations and regional organizations frequently exceed their capacities. And the resources for peace-building are limited, often drawn from the same pool of funds provided by Member States for other activities.

There is also a fundamental paradox inherent in peace-building. On the one hand, effective peace-building requires the long-term engagement of the international community. On the other hand, there is always the danger of making a society permanently dependent on development assistance. That is why so many of us stressed that peace-building needs to be a *home-grown* process, supported by the international community but aimed ultimately at promoting *national self-reliance*.

At our last meeting, in 1998, we established a practical framework for cooperation in the field of conflict prevention. This meeting has expanded that framework to the complementary field of peace-building. We have also agreed to bring these two efforts together in future follow-up activities.

I hope we have moved the international community another step forward in its journey from a "culture of reaction" to a "culture of prevention". And I hope that the Security Council will be able to support the results of our meeting when it reconvenes next week.

Our organizations have now had four meetings aimed at better cooperation and partnership. My sense is that we are making important progress. Let us hope that the next in this series of meetings is equally productive. And meanwhile, let us ensure that there is effective follow-up to this one. Thank you for coming.

# Annex III

## List of participants

**Regional organizations***

Association of Southeast Asian Nations
Caribbean Community
Commonwealth of Independent States
Commonwealth Secretariat
Council of Europe
Council of the European Union
Economic Community of West African States
European Commission
International Organization of La Francophonie
League of Arab States
North Atlantic Treaty Organization
Organization of African Unity
Organization of American States
Organization of the Islamic Conference
Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
Pacific Islands Forum
Presidency of the Council of the European Union
Southern African Development Community

**United Nations organs**

President of the General Assembly
President of the Security Council
President of the Economic and Social Council

**United Nations agencies**

International Monetary Fund
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
United Nations Children's Fund
United Nations Development Fund for Women
United Nations Development Programme
United Nations Environment Programme
United Nations Office at Geneva
United Nations Office at Vienna
World Bank
World Food Programme

* As well as participating intergovernmental organizations.

**Regional Commissions**

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Europe

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

**United Nations Secretariat**

Department for Disarmament Affairs

Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Department of Peacekeeping Operations

Department of Political Affairs

Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict

Under-Secretary-General for special assignments in support of the Secretary-General's preventive and peacekeeping efforts